

**Lewis County Planning Commission  
Public Hearing  
Lewis County Courthouse  
351 NW North St.  
Chehalis, WA**

**November 8, 2011  
Meeting Notes**

**Planning Commissioners Present:** Mike Mahoney, Bob Guenther, Russ Prior, Jim Lowery, Bill Russell, Richard Tausch

**Planning Commissioners Excused:** Arny Davis

**Consultants Present:** Mike McCormick

**Staff Present:** Glenn Carter, Lynn Deitrick, Jerry Basler,

**Others Present:** Please see sign in sheet

**Handouts/Materials Used:**

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from October 25, 2011
- Staff Report on South County Subarea Plan
- Subarea Plan
- Staff Report on Urban Reserve Overlay District
- Chapter 17.20F
- Map of proposed Urban Reserve Areas

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Russell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Commissioners introduced themselves.

**II. Old Business**

**A. Approval of meeting notes from October 25, 2011**

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the meeting notes from October 25. Commissioner Mahoney made the motion; Commissioner Guenther seconded and asked to make a comment. He stated at the last meeting he talked about bringing in jobs that would pay a good living wage. He provided documentation showing demographic and economic information stating the median household income in Washington in 2009 was \$56,317 and per capita personal income was \$42,933. He stated currently Lewis County is under these figures and stressed again the importance of bringing in good jobs.

The Chair stated a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. He asked for corrections; there were none and the motion passed unanimously.

**B. Public Hearing on South County Subarea Plan**

Chairman Russell opened the public hearing and asked people who wanted to give testimony to please sign in. He recognized Mr. Basler.

Mr. Basler gave a summary of the prior workshops and where the plan is at this time. In 2008 several elected officials, land owners and state agencies joined to discuss economic development in South

County, a subarea plan which would be supplemental to the comprehensive plan, and to address those issues. A major part of that plan was a study done by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to identify areas that had the least constraints with wetlands, habitat, and that study resulted in the areas that are shown on the map. There was a third area to the south that was deleted eventually.

The steering committee met monthly for a couple of years to form the policies and identify that these were the best areas to consider for economic development. There was a public hearing last year before the Planning Commission and as a result of that hearing the Planning Commission did not make a recommendation to move the plan forward to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC).

Last spring Mr. Basler and Mr. McCormick developed an outreach program to meet with the landowners in the identified areas that would ultimately be developed. The BOCC made it clear that they would not force people to be included in these areas if they did not want to be; however they asked that Mr. Basler and Mr. McCormick explain to them what it would mean to be included and that if they chose not to be included at this time it was possible they would not be included at a later date.

Most of the property owners who did not want to be included were located in the southern portion of the economic urban growth area. The map was redrawn, resulting in the new boundaries which Mr. Basler pointed out, and a new area to the north was added.

An area farther south was considered for an urban reserve area and it was pulled out because it was not near a city and there was not a lot of economic development there. That left two areas at the intersection I-5 and SR 505 and the area north of Toledo with the new boundaries.

Mr. Basler stated he and Mr. McCormick worked with the state to review the Plan and the state identified issues, essentially with the capital facilities element needing more work, specifically costs, provider of services, etc. The letter from Department of Commerce was included in the member packets and its proposal was to take the policies in the Plan and move those forward to the BOCC. That would result in a map amendment showing the Urban Reserve overlay zones. The policies would go into the comprehensive plan showing that the county would work towards developing the South County plan, allowing staff time to work on the capital facilities and other chapters in the plan.

Chairman Russell asked if there were questions from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Mahoney stated that there are two documents in the Commissioners' packets: the Subarea Plan and the Urban Reserve District overlay zone. He asked for clarification that the Subarea Plan would be forwarded barring any unforeseen changes. Mr. Basler stated the Planning Commissioners would be forwarding the policies only. Commissioner Mahoney asked if the entire plan would go to the BOCC but the Planning Commissioners would recommend adopting the policies only into the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Basler stated that was correct.

There were no other comments and Chairman Russell opened the oral testimony portion of the public hearing. He asked if anyone wished to give testimony.

Mr. Skip Urling, Urling Planning Associates, LLC, Longview, stated he represents a group of people with financial interest in property at Exit 63 on I-5. They understand the BOCC initiated the South County subarea planning effort on the premise that long-term economic development designed to provide

family-wage jobs and increase the tax base to support public infrastructure is directly related to sound land use planning. He believes the county has done this right. The right people were on the steering committee, representing appropriate interests, they developed the plan, took it to the public and got feedback, made adjustments, and what is in the plan now is the result of that effort over the last couple of years.

Mr. Urling supports the plan's designation of tourist/commercial development at the eastern side of Exit 63, which is where his clients have a financial interest. It was done for all the right reasons – large parcels, flat land, the exit makes it easy to get to. There are still some hurdles, one getting infrastructure there to support development. That will come in time and the Urban Reserve will help with that as various agencies responsible for delivering services get together and figure out how to do it. With respect to that, Mr. Urling encouraged the county and its partners to do that with whatever speed they can so the private sector can take advantage of the Plan and move forward to developing the property, again with the goal of creating jobs and an additional tax base.

Mr. Urling stated some have said that no action should be taken until some economic progress is made. He suggested that unless the county leadership takes the initiative to make progress, it will not happen. He urged the Planning Commission to move the Plan forward to the BOCC with a recommendation to adopt.

Mr. Urling provided a written copy of his testimony.

No one else wished to speak and Commissioner Russell closed the oral portion of the public hearing, leaving written testimony open until November 14, 2011. Testimony can be mailed or taken to the Department of Community Development, 2025 NE Kresky Ave, Chehalis, WA until 5:00 p.m. on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

### C. Public Hearing on Urban Reserve Areas

Chairman Russell opened the public hearing on the Urban Reserve Overlay Districts.

Mr. Basler stated earlier he had referenced a meeting with the State and another item that came out of that meeting was how to preserve the [large] land areas as subdivisions would make them unappealing for economic development. One tool is an Urban Reserve Overlay Zone and it was the state's recommendation that the areas slated in the original subarea plan as economic urban development growth areas become Urban Reserve Overlay Zones. Those are the two areas just north of Toledo and at I-5/SR 505. That overlay zone would keep the parcels at 20-acre minimums. To the south there is some RDD-5 and it will not affect them. There are some property owners who could not subdivide any further. Mr. Basler sent out mailings as part of the outreach effort that included staff reports, all the documents that the Planning Commission has been working with, and he had phone conversations with several of the owners. He has not gotten any other feedback at this time.

The utilities between Vader, Toledo and Winlock will run a parallel path with the Plan. When that comes together and the plan is formulated then those preserved areas would become economic urban growth areas with water and sewer provided and development can take place.

Commissioner Mahoney asked if the policies in the Urban Reserve Overlay Zone would be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Basler stated the policies would become part of the development code, amending Title 17 with the map, which is an attachment to the staff report.

Mr. McCormick explained that the addition to the development code is one page which cites purpose, uses permitted, lot requirements, height requirements and other provisions. They are all references to other current provisions in the development code.

Commissioner Guenther stated Mr. Basler sent a mailing out to land owners. He wanted to make sure that that record would be readily available in the future because there might be some people who would say they were not aware of this process. Mr. Basler stated there were three occasions when a mailing went out: one prior to the one-on-one meetings with the land owners, the open house on October 6, and all the material before the Planning Commission also went to the land owners. Material also went out to the owners who were originally in the economic urban growth areas.

Mr. McCormick stated that information would be readily available and it was also in addition to the regular noticing requirements.

Mr. Carter stated there are four properties that are zoned RDD-5 rather than RDD-20 in this area. Mr. Basler stated they were either 13 acres or 30 acres and that the larger of the parcels is 36 acres and is zoned RDD-5. That would now be subject to RDD-20 zoning. There is also a 38-acre parcel that would become RDD-20. Another parcel is 15 acres and one is 10 acres. The four owners have been notified of this change and that they will be affected by the change from RDD-5 to RDD-20 required by the overlay zone.

Chairman Russell ensured that those property owners have been notified. Mr. Basler stated besides the legal notice, they received the same information that the Planning Commissioners have and they are aware that there will be a public hearing before the BOCC.

Commissioner Prior asked if any of those four property owners have responded. Mr. McCormick stated there has been contact from some property owners but there has been no one from those specific four parcels. There was not a lot of follow up contact after the first round of meetings. There were about 20 people at the last public meeting and other than one couple who desired to work with their neighbors to opt out it was a meeting without a lot of substantive discussion or interaction.

Mr. Basler stated individual notices went out to the land owners for that particular meeting.

Chairman Russell opened the oral testimony portion of the public hearing and asked if anyone would like to speak. There was no one.

Chairman Russell closed the oral testimony portion of the hearing and stated written testimony would be taken until 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 14, at the same address as stated above.

Commissioner Prior asked Mr. Basler how long it might take for the utilities element and what a realistic time frame would be for the urban overlay districts to exist.

Mr. McCormick offered to answer those questions. He stated the key component of getting that resolved is figuring out the regional utility and sewer service between the county and the three south county jurisdictions. He stated that the discussions have not been moving ahead as quickly as some thought they might and there is at least one new set of options on the table. He stated it would be hard to predict, but the provision of the overlay is independent of the utilities element and within a

reasonable period of time, say three years, if there is a property owner who feels burdened by that or there has not been progress, it is something the Planning Commission or the BOCC could revisit. You are not bound in perpetuity to live with that. The principle is to preserve the parcel pattern there to optimize future development for economic development.

#### D. Letters of Transmittal on Code Amendments

Commissioner Mahoney stated there are four letters of transmittal; two are specific to the subarea plan and should be held until the next meeting in case any written testimony comes in. The two other letters of transmittal are for utility lots and fences and compliance. These public hearings have been held and those letters are ready for signature.

Chairman Russell stated that is correct unless some written testimony had been received on those issues. Mr. Deitrick stated no correspondence had been received.

Commissioner Mahoney made a motion that the letters of transmittal for 17.145(3), Fences, and 16.02.040(10), Utility Lots and 17.300, Compliance be signed and moved forward to the Board of County Commissioners. Commissioner Lowery seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Russell stated staff had suggested that Chairman Russell could sign the letters of transmittal on the subarea plan and the urban reserve districts if no other testimony was received by the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Mahoney made a motion, providing no further testimony was received, that the Commissioners authorize the signing of the letters of transmittal regarding the subarea plan (one for the comprehensive plan and one for development regulations) and forward same to the BOCC. Commissioner Guenther seconded.

Commissioner Lowery opposed the motion stating he would like another workshop. He has questions about forwarding policies without having a firm idea of what will happen with the capital facilities.

Commissioner Mahoney stated he understood the reason for doing the policy changes rather than adopting the entire plan, and the code changes having to do with the urban reserve areas is so the infrastructure questions can be dealt with. This was the recommendation from Department of Commerce and from staff - that only two pages of policy from the plan would be incorporated into the comprehensive plan. Nothing more would happen until the utilities are determined. He believed it would be appropriate to send the policy changes forward (pages 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6).

Commissioner Lowery stated he would like some questions answered and to not have another workshop felt like pushing the issue.

Chairman Russell stated there was a motion on the floor. He asked Commissioner Mahoney if he would like to amend the motion. Commissioner Mahoney stated he was not opposed to another workshop unless it affected the timelines for noticing the hearing for the BOCC.

Chairman Russell asked if any of the language in the policies had been changed since the last meeting. Mr. Basler stated it is the original language that was in the plan last year.

Chairman Russell asked for the vote. The motion failed 5 to 1. Chairman Russell stated there would be another workshop.

### **III. Calendar**

There was discussion about when to hold the next meeting. It was decided it would be on November 22, 2011, a workshop on the South County Subarea Plan.

### **IV. Good of the Order**

Commissioner Mahoney thanked Mr. McCormick and staff for the work they did on the south county plan and taking the extra time to talk to the property owners. Communication with the citizens has been one of the biggest problems since he was appointed to the Planning Commission. He understood it was a lot of extra work and he appreciated the effort.

Chairman Russell agreed and thought he spoke for the entire Commission.

### **V. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.